

every point, as far as the great majority of the species is concerned, with those now living in our waters, and forming deposits which will become rock at some future time.

It was supposed that most of the species in the much more recent Bergmehl were no longer to be found living; but most of them have been since found. I myself have lately found two species of the Lapland Bergmehl to be still in existence, namely *Eunotia octodon* and *Synedra hemicyclus*; and *Eunotia incisa*, which occurs both in the Lapland and the Mull earths, has been found recent by me in a dozen British gatherings. Yet all these forms were supposed, not long since, to be exclusively fossil. We cannot say that there are no species exclusively fossil, but so many that have been thought so are daily found living, that it is probable the rest may be so found too, and at all events, a very large proportion of the forms in the oldest fossil deposits are absolutely identical with the forms of the present day.

I have only further to mention, that although so many species are universal in their habitat, some appear to be local. Thus, *Terpsinoë musica* does not occur in Europe, nor has it yet been found except in America, and, I think, in Australia.

Some species are decidedly Alpine; for example, *Orthosira spinosa*, which Professor Smith found on the Mont d'Or in Auvergne, and Professor Balfour on the Grampians. It occurs also in nearly every soil from the Andes.

3. "On the Effects of the Severe Frost of last winter on Plants in the neighbourhood of Sligo." By the Right Hon. John Wynne, of Haslewood.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

April 11, 1854.—Dr. Gray, Vice-President, in the Chair.

DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO NEW SPECIES OF PUCRASIA.

By JOHN GOULD, F.R.S. ETC.

Mr. Gould having recently found in the rich stores of the East India Company, at their house in Leadenhall Street, a new species of Pheasant, of the same form but remarkably different from the Pucras Pheasant, took the earliest opportunity, with Dr. Horsfield's permission, of bringing it under the notice of the Society. This fine bird, of which two specimens have been sent to the East India Company from Kafirstan by Dr. William Griffith, may be at once recognized by the uniform chestnut colouring of its mantle, breast and flanks, which has suggested the specific name of

PUCRASIA CASTANEA.

Forehead, cheeks, chin and lengthened portion of the crest dark shining green; hinder part of the head and the shorter portion of the crest dull sandy-buff, the two colours blending on the occiput; on each side of the neck an oval patch of white; lanceolate feathers of the neck, both above and below, breast and flanks, deep chestnut;

feathers of the upper part of the back black, stained with chestnut on the outer web and margined with grey; lower part of the back and rump grey, fading into white on the edges, and with a narrow streak of blackish-brown down the shaft; wing-coverts dark brown, largely edged with greyish and ashy-brown; primaries brown on the inner margins, cream-white on the outer ones; feathers of the lower part of the abdomen brownish-black, edged with whitish; under tail-coverts chestnut, with a black line down the centre, and fringed with white at the tip; upper tail-coverts ashy-grey, with a broad mark of blackish-brown down the centre, but not extending to the tip; tail-feathers black, the central ones broadly margined with grey freckled with black, the remainder fringed with whitish at the tip; bill black; feet horny-brown.

Total length, 23 inches; wing, $9\frac{3}{4}$; tail, $10\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $2\frac{5}{8}$.

Hab. Kafiristan.

Remark.—This species is altogether a stouter and larger bird than *Pucrasia macrolopha*.

Mr. Gould further remarked that, upon a careful examination and comparison of the Pheasants from Nepal, which have usually been considered as identical with the *P. macrolopha*, with true examples of that species, he found them to differ so considerably, that he felt justified in characterizing the Nepalese birds as distinct, under the name of

PUCRASIA NIPALENSIS.

Forehead, cheeks, chin and lengthened portion of the crest deep shining green; hinder part of the head and the shorter portion of the crest buff, with lighter shafts, the two colours blending on the occiput; on each side of the neck an oval spot of white; feathers of the sides and back of the neck and upper part of the back brownish-black, with a narrow mark of rich chestnut down the centre, and edged with rufous or whitish; feathers of the lower part of the back brownish-black, with white shafts and edges; wing-coverts brownish-black, with white shafts and margins; scapularies broadly margined with deep reddish-buff; primaries brown on the internal web, deep buff on the outer; tertiaries pale chestnut, mottled with black along the shaft and towards the edge, which is sandy-buff; throat, centre of the breast and abdomen rich chestnut; flank-feathers brownish-black with white shafts, bordered on each side by a very fine line of chestnut, and narrowly edged with grey, the markings becoming larger and paler behind the thigh; under tail-coverts lively chestnut, with an oval spot of white at the tip of each; centre tail-feathers rufous, stained with black near the shaft, the remainder black on the inner web and at the tip, the outer webs chestnut, which colour curves round into and occupies a portion of the internal web near the tip; all fringed with white at the tips; bill black; feet horny-brown.

Total length, $20\frac{3}{4}$ inches; wing, $8\frac{1}{2}$; tail, 9; tarsi, $2\frac{1}{2}$.

Hab. Nepal and Bhotan.

Remark.—In size this bird is the smallest of the three species of

the genus, but it is by far the most highly coloured and beautifully marked; the mantle, the sides of the neck and the flank-feathers are conspicuously striated with black, chestnut and grey; the same parts in the other species being sombre in comparison.

Specimens are contained in the collection at the British Museum, in that of the East India Company, and, Mr. Gould believes, in that of the Jardin des Plantes at Paris.

April 25.—Dr. Gray, Vice-President, in the Chair.

NOTES ON THE HABITS OF SOME INDIAN BIRDS. PART III.

BY LIEUT. BURGESS.

Family MERULIDÆ.

Subfamily TIMALINÆ.

Genus TIMALIA.

TIMALIA MALCOLMI, Sykes. LARGE BABBLER.

This Large Babbler, though not generally so common, I believe, as *Timalia grisea*, I have shot in the Deccan in the districts near the city of Ahmednuggur. It is gregarious in its habits, flying about in flocks of eight or ten. It lives much on the ground, seeking its food, which consists of grasshoppers, beetles, black and white ants, and other insects, under large trees and hedgerows, scratching up and turning over the dead leaves with its strong claws. It also feeds on grain; the stomach of one which I examined contained bajece seeds and the remains of black ants, of another the remains of black and white ants. This fact, I think, accounts for the habit of these birds, of scratching amongst the decayed leaves round the trunks of large trees, where both the black and white ants are sure to be found; indeed it is almost impossible to find a large tree without a colony of the former round its roots. I am not certain whether the nest and eggs in the Museum of the Zoological Society, marked as those of the Greater Thimalia, belong to this bird, or to *Timalia grisea*; but as I procured two or three specimens of the Large Babbler and not one of *T. grisea*, I think that there is every probability that the nest and eggs belong to this species. I believe that birds of the genus *Timalia* breed twice during the year, as I have found their nests in the months of May and October. The nest brought to me in the month of October was found in a tuft of high grass in a boggy piece of ground; it contained four eggs of a uniform rich blue, $\frac{9}{16}$ in. in length by nearly $\frac{7}{16}$ in. in width. The number of eggs does not exceed four. The nest above-mentioned was composed of coarse matted grass at the bottom, and finer bents on the sides, lined also with bents of grass; it was loosely put together.

There are the nest and eggs of another species of *Timalia* in the Museum of the Zoological Society; but not having put the bird off her nest, I am unable positively to assert to what species they belong. I believe, from the smallness of the eggs, that they probably belong

to *Timalia hyperythra* or *T. hypoleuca*; but this point requires further investigation.

Subfamily ORIOLINÆ.

Genus ORIOLUS.

ORIOLUS AUREUS, Gmel. INDIAN ORIOLE or MANGO BIRD.

This is common in the Deccan, frequenting banian trees and topes of mangoes, whence its name. These birds are particularly fond of the fruit of the banian, or Indian fig; the gizzard of one which I shot was full of the seeds of this small fig. The Indian Oriole begins to breed in the month of June. A pair of these birds built their nest on the small forked branches of a flowering tree in my garden at Ahmednuggur. The nest was composed of various fibrous substances, amongst which pieces of hemp appeared to predominate; with this two of the branches were bound together; some fragments of part of a letter which had been torn up and thrown away were inserted; the handwriting on the paper I easily recognized as that of a lady at the station. The nest, in its position, and in the manner in which it was attached to the boughs, was much like that figured by Mr. Yarrell in his work on British Birds as the nest of the Golden Oriole. The nest, I believe, contained four eggs, of a white ground with claret-coloured spots. This nest, with the eggs, and a pair of the old birds, are in the possession of the Zoological Society.

NOTICE OF A NEW INDIAN SWALLOW.

By FREDERIC MOORE, ASSIST. EAST IND. COMP. MUSEUM.

The subject that I beg to lay before the Meeting this evening, is a new form belonging to the family *Hirundinidæ*, lately collected in Nepal and presented to the Museum of the East India Company by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., which is allied to, but certainly distinct from, the genus *Chelidon*, and for which the following anagrammatic name is proposed.

DELICHON (nov. gen.).

Gen. Char. Bill short, thick, robust, gape rather wide, the culmen rounded, the nostrils basal, lateral and rounded. Wings rather long, with the first quill the longest. Tail short, and emarginated or nearly even at the end. Tarsi longer than the middle toe, and clothed with plumes. Toes long and clothed with plumes, the inner shorter than the outer; the claws moderate and curved.

Type, *D. Nipalensis*, Hodgs. n. sp.

Spec. Char. Top of the head, chin, cheeks, ear-coverts, nape, back, upper and under tail-coverts, fine glossy black; wings black, paler beneath, the upper coverts fringed with glossy black, the under coverts dusky black; tail black, fringed on the external webs with glossy black; a band of white across the rump; throat, breast, abdomen, lower part of flanks and vent white, upper part of flanks black; tarsi